



UPCOMING EVENTS:
 Next Meeting: Monday, April 21, 2025
 Location: **The Lamar Senior Activity Center**
 2874 Shoal Crest Ave Austin TX 78705

6:00 PM Doors open. Meet, Eat and Greet
 Bring an Easter or EGG based treat to share

6:30PM Business Meeting
6:45PM Guest Speaker **Arusha Gupta** from Beevo
7:45PM Door Prizes
8:00PM Meeting Ends

TYPES of SPLITS to MANAGE YOUR HIVES

By Elissa Sexton

There are several different types of splits that beekeepers can use to manage their hives, each serving different purposes, such as preventing swarming, increasing colony numbers, or managing hive health. Now is the time to start thinking about splits if you haven't already done so.

A **nucleus hive (nuc) split** involves creating a smaller colony by taking a portion of the bees, brood, and sometimes the queen from an existing hive. This smaller colony, called a nuc, is kept in a small hive box and allowed time to grow into a full colony.

A **walkaway split** is a simple and low-maintenance method where a portion of the colony, including bees and brood, is moved into a new hive box. The original queen stays with one portion, and the new hive may or may not have a queen, with the bees left to raise one if needed.

A **timed split** relies on the careful timing of brood development, splitting the colony when the queen has laid eggs but the brood has not yet emerged, allowing the new colony to raise a queen from the eggs or larvae.

In a **queen cell split**, a beekeeper removes a queen cell from a colony that is preparing to swarm and places it in a new hive along with bees and brood, allowing the new queen to hatch and take over the split colony.

A **double split** involves dividing the hive into two parts, with one part keeping the original queen and the other receiving either a queen cell or a mated queen. This method increases the number of colonies and offers a higher chance of success.

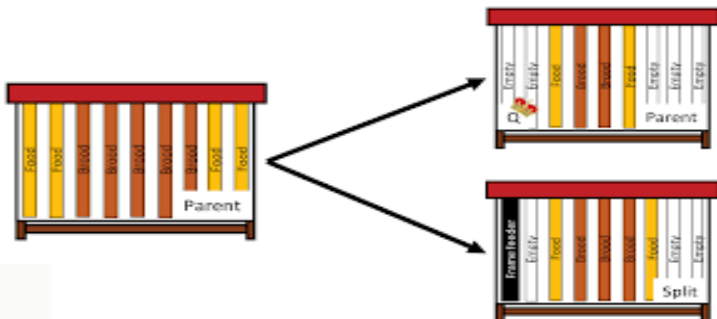
In a **division board split**, a division board is inserted into a single hive box, creating two separate sections, each with its own colony, resources, and possibly a new queen.

An **artificial swarm, or mated queen split**, is performed to prevent a colony from swarming by removing the queen, some bees, and brood to a new hive, while the original colony either raises a new queen or receives a mated one.

A **resource split** involves transferring honey, pollen, and brood from one hive to create a new colony, which may or may not have a queen at the time of the split.

Lastly, an **after swarm split** is done after a colony has swarmed, with the beekeeper taking brood and bees from the original hive to create a new colony and the remaining bees either raise a new queen or are requeened.

Each of these splitting techniques offers a unique way to manage hives, based on the beekeeper's goals and the timing of the beekeeping season. There are even more ways to split your hive but these are the most common. If you need assistance with splits reach out to the knowledgeable folks in our bee club.



What's Blooming in the Austin Area?

Rachael Lam

In April, the Austin, Texas area is adorned with a variety of native wildflowers that not only enhance the landscape but also provide essential resources for bees.

The **Texas Bluebonnet** (*Lupinus texensis*), which typically blooms from March to May, is one of the most iconic flowers of the region. Similarly, the **Indian Paintbrush** (*Castilleja indivisa*), known for its vibrant red blooms, also flourishes during this period. The **White Prickly Poppy** (*Argemone albiflora*), which blooms from April to June, further enriches the floral diversity of April in the Austin area. All providing valuable nectar resources for bees.

Another notable bloom is the **Winecup** (*Callirhoe involucrata*), recognized by its purple poppy-like flowers, which can bloom year-round under favorable conditions. The **Pink Evening Primrose** (*Oenothera speciosa*), which blooms from February to July, adds a delicate touch to the landscape.

Additionally, the **Wild Red Columbine** (*Aquilegia canadensis*), with its distinctive red and yellow flowers, blooms from February to July and is attractive to various pollinators.



The **Prairie Verbena** (*Glandularia bipinnatifida*), which blooms from March through November, is another common sight during April. Similarly, the **Drummond's Phlox** (*Phlox drummondii*), which blooms from March through May, adds to the vibrant colors of the season.

The **Spotted Beebalm** (*Monarda punctata*), which blooms from April to June, is also prevalent during this time. The **Coreopsis** (*Coreopsis tinctoria*), which blooms from March to May.

These native plants not only beautify the region but also play a crucial role in supporting local ecosystems by providing food and habitat for various pollinators.



HONEY CAKE

- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp cooking salt (*kosher salt*)
- 1 cup unsalted butter , *at room temperature*
- 2/3 cup honey
- 4 [large eggs](#) , *at room temperature*
- 3 tbsp milk , *preferably full-fat, slightly warmed*
- 1 pinch orange zest , *optional (brings out honey flavour)*
- 1/3 cup almond flakes
- Honey syrup**
- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/4 cup water
- 3/4 tsp lemon juice (*recommended but optional*)

Procedure:

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Prepare cake pan: Butter and line an 8" round pan or springform pan with baking paper

Whisk Dry ingredients: Whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl.

Cream butter and honey: In a separate bowl, cream the butter and honey for 3 minutes, scraping down the sides halfway, until smooth and fluffy. (Speed 7 handheld beater or stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment).

Add eggs and flour – Add one egg, mix with a wooden spoon for 30 seconds until mostly incorporated into the batter (mixture will look curdled). Then add in 1/4 of the flour and mix until the batter comes together. Repeat again – mixing in 1 egg, then a portion of flour – until you've used all the eggs.

Milk and zest: Stir in the milk and orange zest, stir until the batter is almost completely smooth. The batter should be quite thick, but soft.

Bake 45 min: Scrape batter into the prepared pan, smooth the surface and sprinkle with almonds. Bake for 45 minutes or until a knife inserted into the centre comes out clean.

Cool 30 min: Remove cake from the oven. Cool for 30 minutes in the pan – don't skip this else the cake gets too dense when soaked with syrup.

Honey Syrup: Meanwhile, make the syrup. Bring the honey and water to a gentle boil for 5 minutes over medium-low heat. Add the lemon juice and boil for 2 more minutes. Remove from heat, cool for 10 minutes then use per below.

Poke and soak: Poke about 30 holes all across the surface using a skewer (between the almond flakes). Pour 1/4 of the warm Honey Syrup across the surface (if using a springform pan, put it on a plate in case it leaks). Once it mostly sinks in, repeat 3 more times, waiting between pours for the syrup to soak in. Then leave the cake to soak for 15 minutes.

Recipe Notes: Leftovers will keep for 4 days in the fridge. Warm before serving as the crumb firms up when cold!

Signs and Conditions Your Hive is About to Swarm

By Eddie Monske

Swarming is one of the most fascinating and vital behaviors in the life cycle of a honeybee colony—but for beekeepers, it can also be a challenge. A swarm occurs when a colony becomes overcrowded, prompting the queen and a large portion of the bees to leave in search of a new home. Swarming can significantly reduce the honey production and strength of the original hive. Recognizing the early signs that a hive is preparing to swarm is essential for timely intervention and hive management. Here are the key conditions that lead to swarming and the warning signs to watch for:

- #1 The hive is very strong and you're in a good nectar flow
 - #2 You are in a strong flow and the bees are making drone cells
 - #3 You see queen cells. (this is about as sure a sign as any your bees are about to swarm).
 - #4 There is no room for the queen to lay and/or they are back filling
 - #5 Your queen is more than 1 year old
 - #6 You've had a lot of rain or a big rain storm.
 - #7 Rain plus any item above will increase chances of a swarm.
- The rain maximizes their chances of having resources for a new home (pollen & nectar).

To **prevent** swarming, beekeepers can focus on providing ample space, ensuring good ventilation, and managing the colony's resources and queen. Methods include adding more frames or boxes, rotating brood frames, harvesting honey to create space, and splitting the colony. Additionally, inspecting for drone cells and removing queen cells can help delay swarming, as can using low-swarming breeds and maintaining a young queen.

This should help you stay one step ahead in maintaining a healthy and productive apiary. Bees can swarm if the conditions are right and their numbers are good. They don't always give you notice. Sometimes they just take off on a whim!

Club News and Updates

By Joy Mills

We hope you are as happy as we are with the new location for our monthly meetings. Having a permanent location helps with recruiting and maintaining membership. As such there are certain responsibilities/obligations we have to the Lamar Senior Center. One in particular came to our attention this past month. As a city operated building we are allowed to use the facility for free with the stipulation that we do not charge for the meeting, ie money does not change hands at the center. Our meetings are free and open to anyone who is interested in learning about bees and beekeeping. Our Membership fee extends beyond the meeting and is collected to cover things like this newsletter and other social media accounts. It gives members have access to our Club Library, or upkeep/use/loan of honey harvesting equipment. These funds will also be used to create mentorship programs or workshops in beekeeping once we have a an established budget. With this in mind we will need to collect dues outside of the Senior Center. Soon our WEB SITE will be set up to take payments or checks can be mailed to Rachel Lam. Thanks for your understanding in this new adventure.

Along the same lines, it is important to be aware of the needs of the custodial staff at the Center. Their workday ends at 8:30pm and all guests need to be out of the **parking lot** by this time. Our Meeting time is 6-8pm. This gives us and the staff 30 minutes to cleanup and leave the premises. We know sometimes it's hard to stop the great conversations that pop-up after a presentation, but let's be mindful of the clock!

This week's Speaker comes to us from the **Beevo Beekeeping Society**

Through student leadership, the Beevo Beekeeping Society aims to spread a love of beekeeping and native pollinators at the University of Texas at Austin. Committed to pollinator conservation and sustainable practices, Beevo fosters awareness through hands-on education, community outreach, and sustainability-focused social events. Their objective is to cultivate an eco-conscious campus and inspire others to support the vital role of pollinators in our environment.

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